



September 16, 2004



**Guilty plea to illegal firearms possession  
stems from  
from accidental shooting**

**Mynor Juarez**, 34, of Providence, pleaded guilty today to being an illegal alien in possession of a firearm, an offense that stemmed from the accidental shooting of a coworker last year at a Cranston food service plant.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the guilty plea, which Juarez entered today before Senior U.S. District Court Judge Ronald R. Lagueux in U.S. District Court, Providence. Juarez, of 35 Ralph Street, is free on unsecured bond pending sentencing, which is scheduled for December 2.

At the plea hearing, Assistant U.S. Attorney Zechariah Chafee said that, had the case gone to trial, the government would have proven that, on November 26, 2003, Cranston Police went to a food products plant on Fletcher Street in response to a report of a shooting. The victim was on the loading dock with a bullet wound to his right side.

A police investigation determined that Juarez had purchased a .25 caliber pistol because his car had been vandalized. He was showing the gun to a co-worker after removing the clip but forgot that a round was in the chamber and the gun accidentally discharged, injuring his coworker. Juarez asked that someone call 911 and hid the gun, which police later recovered over a ceiling of the plant.

Juarez admitted that he illegally entered the United States from Guatemala in 1993. He had been using fraudulent identification documents, which he said he'd purchased from a man on Cranston Street.

It is illegal for an undocumented alien to possess firearms. The statutory maximum penalty is ten years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine. Federal sentencing is determined on the basis of guidelines that rely on such factors as the specific nature of an offense and a defendant's criminal background, if any. Juarez is also subject to deportation.

Cranston Police charged Juarez with state offenses. He was charged federally after a joint review of the case by the United States Attorney's Office and the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office.

### **Project Safe Neighborhoods**

**Cranston Police** and the **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives** investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Chafee prosecuted it as part of **Project Safe Neighborhoods**, a Department of Justice initiative against gun crimes. Under Project Safe Neighborhoods, the U.S. Attorney's Office, working with Providence Police, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, and other agencies, aggressively prosecutes federal firearms offenses in an effort to incarcerate those responsible for gun violence and deter others from committing gun crimes. Since 2001, gun offenders in Rhode Island have been sentenced to a total of more than 540 years in federal prison.